This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1.   (Currently Amended) A push network comprising~~;~~:
means for copying information held in a packet sent from an information providing terminal and for generating a plurality of packets with the same information,
means for distributing the packets thereby generated to a plurality of user terminals; wherein:
means within said information ~~proving~~ providing terminal for adding information to [[a]] the packet;
means within said information ~~proving~~ providing terminal for adding to the packet a content identifier or both the content identifier and a category identifier;
wherein the information provided by said information providing terminal is assigned a unique content identifier or both the content identifier and the category identifier for identifying the category to which the content of the information in the packet belongs; and
wherein the distributing means comprises means for deciding, in accordance with the content identifier, or in accordance with one or both of the content identifier and category identifier, whether or not to distribute that packet to a given user terminal.

2.   (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 1, wherein means is provided for adding a content identifier to a packet, and the distributing means comprises means for deciding, in accordance with the content identifier, whether or not to distribute that packet to a given user terminal.

3.   (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the decision means includes:
a table, provided in correspondence with a destination, in which content identifier related information has been registered; and

means for passing a packet if the content identifier added to that packet matches the content identifier related information registered in the table.

4.   (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 3, wherein means is provided for registering content identifier related information in the table in accordance with notification from a user.

5.   (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 3, wherein means is provided for deleting from the table content identifier related information that has been registered in the table, once a series of packets to which that content identifier has been added have passed.

6.   (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 5, wherein the deleting means comprises means for deleting content identifier related information from the table after a prescribed time interval has elapsed after the series of packets have passed.

7.   (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 3, wherein means is provided for deleting from the table, at a predetermined time, content identifier related information registered in the table.

8.   (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 3, wherein the decision means comprises means for receiving a packet requesting deletion of content identifier related information, and for deleting the corresponding content identifier related information from the table.

9.   (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the user terminal comprises means for transmitting a packet requesting deletion of content identifier related information.

10. (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the information providing terminal comprises means for transmitting a packet requesting deletion of content identifier related information.

11. (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 3, wherein the decision means comprises means which, if no packet having the same content identifier as that of passed packets arrives within a fixed time interval after the final packet has passed, deletes from the table the information relating to that content identifier.

12-13. (Cancelled)

14. (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the registering means comprises means for receiving a request packet in which has been written a content identifier relating to content desired by a user, and means for registering content identifier related information in the aforementioned table in accordance with the content identifier written in the request packet received by this receiving means.

15. (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 4, wherein one registering means is provided for a plurality of decision means, and this registering means comprises: means for storing, in correspondence with content, information indicative of the information providing terminal constituting the source of packets with that content; means for searching for a route from that information providing terminal to a given user terminal in accordance with the stored contents of this storage means; and means which, in accordance with the result of the search conducted by this searching means, registers content identifier related information notified by a user, in the tables of the decision means along the route in question.

16-20. (Cancelled)

21.   Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 1, wherein means is provided for temporarily storing a packet which the decision means has decided to distribute.

22-24. (Cancelled)

25.   (Original) A push network as claimed in Claim 1, wherein means is provided for adding to a packet one or both of a content identifier and a category identifier; and the distributing means comprises means for deciding, in accordance with this content identifier and/or category identifier, whether or not to distribute that packet to a given user terminal.

26-44. (Cancelled)